

ESPRIT ORCHESTRA UNVEILS 25TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON, ANNOUNCES 2009 EUROPEAN TOUR AND CREATIVE SPARKS MENTORING & CREATIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME AND LAUNCHES R. MURRAY SCHAFER'S NEWEST CD – *LETTERS FROM MIGNON*.

Highlights of the Esprit Orchestra 25th Anniversary Season include:

- Subscription Series that includes Esprit's Greatest Hits
- Orchestral Space concerts in innovative performing environments
- 10 World Premieres
- Continued expansion of the New Wave Composers Festival with special focus on young composers directly associated with countries participating in the 2009 tour
- Showcase of International Works linked to the 2009 international tour
- A unique educational highlight – the continuation of the Creative Sparks Programme

The season will include richly varied concerts featuring series of **Esprit's Greatest Hits**, "**Orchestral Space**" concerts exploring unusual venues away from the concert hall, **new international works** and more than 10 newly commissioned **World Premieres by Canadian composers**, an **expanded New Wave Composers Festival** having a strong international profile, and the continuation of the **Creative Sparks Mentoring and Creative Leadership Programme** and plans for a major **International Tour**.

SEASON DETAILS:

- Esprit's 25th Anniversary Season concerts will include **Esprit's Greatest Hits** – works carefully chosen repertoire from our past 24 years. Concerts will also feature commissioned works by Canadian composers, classic contemporary pieces showing the evolution of music over the past 50 years, important international works and works showcasing Canadian soloists.
- The Season will also include a pair of "**Orchestral Space**" concerts exploring unusual venues away from the concert hall that accommodate Esprit's musicians spatially distributed in the performing space. These concerts allow for audiences to explore new acoustic perspectives. Spatial concerts have proven to be amongst Esprit's most popular events and have attracted new audiences to Esprit.
- **International works and newly commissioned pieces by Canadian composers** will be highlighted, including Esprit commissions and World Premiers by Vincent Ho, David Adamcyk, Maxime McKinley, Wolf Edwards, Chris Paul Harman, Jacques Héту, R. Murray Schafer, Aaron Gervais and others.
- An **expanded New Wave Composers Festival** having a strong international profile linked to exchange projects being developed in tandem with Esprit's touring plans for 2009. The festival will highlight the education activities of Esprit's Toward a Living Art Programme and serve as the culmination of our Creative Sparks Mentoring and Creative Leadership Programme. The 2008 festival will include a forum on the state of broadcasting in various countries and its impact on the works of today's composers. International guest composers, conductors and broadcasters will be featured in the festivals activities. Esprit's New Wave Composers Festival has continued to grow as one of the most important meeting points for Canada's young composers. It provides a major interface between emerging creators, the public and music industry professionals.
- The continuation of **Creative Sparks Mentoring and Creative Leadership Programme**. A community-based pilot project involving the composition and performance of new music by public and high school students. The programme will feature activities and concerts taking place in venues throughout the Greater Toronto Area. The plan involves composers of various ages and stylistic leanings, working with students throughout the season to create new works which will be performed by students combined with Esprit players during the 2008 New Wave Festival. The project will also involve an array of international guest composers related to the 2008 New Wave Festival. This programme will involve young people of all levels of musical accomplishment and will reach many layers in the community - from areas with many resources available, to those where increased

cultural and social investment is needed desperately. Participating composers include R. Murray Schafer, John Rea, José Evangelista, Brian Current, Douglas Schmidt, Chris Paul Harman, Alexina Louie, Alex Pauk, Michael Colgrass, plus composers from Holland, Spain, Croatia, Serbia, England and Bulgaria. Organizations committed to the project include St. Elizabeth Catholic High School, Claude Watson School for the Arts and the Nathaniel Dett Chorale.

Special support for this project has been made available by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Arts Education Partnership Initiative of the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture (administered by the Ontario Arts Foundation) and the Canada Council Supplementary Operating Funds Initiative. The project provides “matching funds” opportunities.

- Production of a high quality **Esprit 25th Anniversary commemorative package** to include a book detailing Esprit's history and role in the Canadian music scene along with a boxed set of CDs and DVDs containing selected Esprit audio and video recordings. This commemorative package will form a permanent record of Canadian music history created by Esprit in a manner useful to the general public as well as students and music lovers of all ages.
- Throughout the 2007 / 2008 season Esprit will be preparing for one of the most exciting and ambitious initiatives in its history – **a major European tour** centered around an invitation to give three concerts at the **2009 Zagreb Music Biennale**. In April 2009 the Biennale will celebrate its 50th Anniversary as one of the most prestigious and important international festivals of new music in the world (recipient of the 2007 European Culture Award). In its history the Biennale has featured such composers as Stravinsky and Berio. The 2007 festival featured Royal Stockholm Philharmonic in programme of Swedish music, as well as Penderecki as main guest composer. Esprit is honored to be representing Canada in the Biennale's “Musical Links” programme during the year in which the festival will mark an important year of celebrations. Esprit's appearances at the Biennale will be the finale of a tour, which also includes concerts tentatively planned in Amsterdam, Madrid, Sophia, Belgrade and Bucharest. Esprit's invitation to perform at the Muziekgebouw in Amsterdam recognizes Esprit's past initiative in developing a 10-year exchange programme between Holland and Canada. During Esprit's stay in Amsterdam, Dutch musical organizations will organize a “New Wave Festival” serving as a complimentary second stage to concerts and other activities launched at Esprit's 2008 New Wave Festival. The Biennale project is part of an exchange initiative that will also bring Zagreb's *Cantus Ensemble* to Toronto through an Esprit partnership with *Les Amis*. Esprit cherishes a long-standing set of friendships with Dutch composers, and the Donemus and Gaudeamus Foundations. We look forward to a new extended period of musical relations with Holland, a country which leads the world in its support of new music creations.

SEASON DATES:

October 2007	venue and date TBA
November 25, 2007	Jane Mallett Theatre, St Lawrence Centre for the Arts
January 27, 2008	Jane Mallett Theatre, St Lawrence Centre for the Arts
March 2, 2008	Jane Mallett Theatre, St Lawrence Centre for the Arts
May 4, 2008	Jane Mallett Theatre, St Lawrence Centre for the Arts
May 11, 2008	Jane Mallett Theatre, St Lawrence Centre for the Arts

New Wave Composers Festival

May 4-11, 2008 Venues throughout GTA

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